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URBAN DISTRICT OF BRENTWOOD

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR

1948



URBAN DISTRICT OF BRENTWOOD

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Chairman: COUNCILLOR J. F. HOUGH, M.A.(Cantab), J.P.

Vice-Chairman: COUNCILLOR H. J. FARROW.

Councillors:

F. P. Brinkworth,	J. Ffrancon Jones, J.P.,
H. E. Brownett,	H. J. Kirby,
V. H. Burton,	A. J. Lamb,
Rev. E. W. Byles, B.A., B.D.(Lond.),	Miss D. M. Landon (Vice-Chairman
D. Campbell,	of the Health Committee),
A. V. Cave (Chairman of the	T. N. Lavender,
Health Committee),	J. R. Meadon,
A. H. Christey,	G. A. D. McTurk,
E. R. D. de Rougemont, J.P.,	F. W. C. Salway,
P. W. Duck,	D. C. J. Scott,
J. Durston,	W. H. Venner,
S. B. Farrell,	R. H. Willard,
P. W. Hammond,	S. A. Wilson.
E. R. Hartley,	

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health (Part-time):

B. FRASER BEATSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.T.M. & H.

Bacteriologists and Analysts:

The Counties Public Health Laboratories.

Senior Sanitary Inspector:

F. G. SPENCER, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., Sanitary Inspector, Meat and Food Inspector and Smoke Inspector, Royal Sanitary Institute's Certificate in Sanitary Science as applied to Buildings and Public Works.

First Additional Sanitary Inspector:

P. T. SHELTON, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., Sanitary Inspector, Meat and Food Inspector, Royal Sanitary Institute.

Second Additional Sanitary Inspector:

G. H. ROBERTS, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A., Sanitary Inspector, Meat and Food Inspector, Royal Sanitary Institute.
(Appointed 20th January, 1948.)

Clerks and Shorthand-Typists:

Miss D. GRIFFITHS (resigned 31st January, 1948);
Miss B. BRAYDEN (appointed 12th January, 1948, resigned 16th October, 1948);
Miss C. F. CONNATTY (appointed 5th April, 1948);
Miss L. F. CLARK (appointed 18th October, 1948).

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1948.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Urban District Council of Brentwood.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Annual Report for the year 1948, in accordance with the Minister of Health's Circular 3/49.

In the public health world the outstanding event of the year has been the inauguration of the National Health Service Act, 1946, which commenced to operate on the 5th July, 1948. Under this Act the County Council became the Local Health Authority, but much of the administrative control of public health services has been decentralised from County Councils to Area Health Committees and other bodies.

The most suitable delineation and grouping of health areas have been subjects of controversy throughout the country; their success as administrative units is in course of trial.

In my view an unfortunate feature in the Act is the failure to grasp the opportunity of bringing the Medical Officers of Health of County Districts into these new administrative "set-ups." This means the loss of expert local advice at executive level.

The Area Health Committee is advised by an Area Medical Officer. When the Area comprises a number of districts the result is merely to exchange one remote control officer, namely the County Medical Officer, for another, namely the Area Medical Officer.

The Council of the Urban District of Brentwood has now ceased to be a Local Health Authority, and has become a Local Sanitary Authority. The effect on the work of the Public Health Department has, however, been almost negligible by reason of the fact that, with one exception, the work now being administered by the Area Health Committee was already in the hands of the County Council. That one exception is the Foot Clinic which was set up by the Urban District Council in July, 1944, and has proved its value. The Clinic has now passed out of our control, but will, I hope, be enabled to continue to render good service to the people of Brentwood.

The health of the district has maintained a very satisfactory level. There has been no untoward happening. The general incidence of notifiable diseases was the lowest since 1939. The number of cases of Diphtheria was the smallest I have ever been able to record.

The Sanitary Inspectors, under the able leadership of Mr. F. G. Spencer, have done notably good work and are to be highly commended. The presence of the Second Additional Sanitary Inspector has helped enormously in bringing the district under fuller inspection. I am indebted to the Senior Sanitary Inspector, both for valuable co-operation in the compilation of statistics contained in this report, and for loyal and unfailing co-operation in all health matters throughout the year.

I have to thank my whole staff, both inspectorial and clerical, for valuable services rendered.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

B. FRASER BEATSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Laboratory Facilities.

(a) Routine examinations of milk and water samples were again carried out by the Counties Public Health Laboratories at 66, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

(b) Other laboratory examinations were made at St. Andrew's Hospital, Billericay.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE AREA.

Water Supplies.

From Mains.

Main water supplies to the area are provided principally by the South Essex Waterworks Company, and to a less extent by the Southend Waterworks Company. These supplies were satisfactory in both quality and quantity.

Six samples taken from the South Essex Waterworks Company's mains showed the water to be clear and bright in appearance and of very satisfactory bacteriological purity and, therefore, suitable for drinking and domestic purposes. Chemically, the water was free from metals, apart from a negligible trace of iron, but it was hard in character, though not to an excessive degree. The average hardness was:—

Temporary, 175; Permanent, 77.5; Total, 252.5
(calculated in parts per million).

Six samples of water taken from the Southend Waterworks Company's mains showed the water to be clear and bright in appearance and of a very satisfactory bacteriological purity, and suitable, therefore, for drinking and domestic purposes. Chemically, this is a soft water, the average hardness being:—

Temporary, 25; Permanent, Nil; Total, 25
(calculated in parts per million).

The number of properties which obtain their water supply from standpipes has been further reduced, as during the year eight houses were provided with a piped supply from the mains, and taps installed inside the houses.

Sanitary Inspection of Area.

	Inspections.	Re-inspections.
Housing Regulations	34	347
Housing (Overcrowding Provisions)	8	—
Council Houses	13	—
Allocation of Council Houses	402	48
Moveable Dwellings	6	3
Sanitary Defects	376	1,293
Verminous or Dirty Premises	38	24
Infectious Diseases	26	16
Water Supply	67	48
Drains—Inspected	66	59
Tested	30	8
Sewers	19	11
Cesspools	28	6
Sanitary Conveniences—Schools	1	—
Factories—Power	64	31
Non-power	29	2
Outworkers' Premises	4	—
Bakehouses	15	—
Rat Infested Premises	105	101
Ponds, Ditches and Watercourses	39	40
Swine, Fowls, etc.	9	10
Accumulations of Refuse	16	9
Refuse Tips	19	3
Requisitioned Property	12	1
Miscellaneous Visits	270	16
Sewers—Rat Destruction	14	—

Sanitary Inspection of Area (continued)

							Inspections.	Re-inspections.
Fair Grounds	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	—
Offensive Trades	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
Hairdressers' Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	—
Swimming Pools	...	...	...	...	...	...	8	—
							<hr/> 1,735	<hr/> 2,076

Food Inspection.

Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
Meat Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	116
Horseflesh Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Provision and other Food Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	103
Food Preparing Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Dairies and Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Ice-cream Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	132
Knackers Yards	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
Cowsheds	...	...	...	...	...	...	152
Cafés and Restaurants	...	...	...	...	...	...	182

Food Sampling.

Milk	...	...	...	...	...	...	47
Ice-cream	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
Water	...	...	...	...	...	...	15

840

Number of Complaints received = 540.

HOUSING.

1. (a) Number of dwellinghouses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... 376
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... 2,050
2. Number found not to be in all respects reasonably fit ... 201
3. Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notices:
Number of defective dwellinghouses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local authority or their officers ... 172
4. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:
 - (a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:—
 - (1) Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... *39
 - (2) Number of dwellinghouses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—
 - (a) By Owners ... 28
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of Owners ... 2
 - (b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:—
 - (1) Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... †8
 - (2) Number of dwellinghouses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—
 - (a) By Owners ... 8
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of Owners... 9

[*In addition to these, one underground room was closed under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936, and one house was demolished under Section 11 of the Act, the Demolition Order having been made in 1947.]

[†In addition to these, seven Notices were served under Section 75 of the Public Health Act, 1936, requiring provision of new dustbins.]

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

Milk Sampling.

Pasteurised Milk—

Number of Samples taken	...	...	...	...	...	16
Number of Samples satisfactory	...	...	...	...	...	16

Undesignated Milk—

Number of Samples taken	...	...	...	...	...	31
Number of Samples satisfactory	...	...	...	...	...	28
[Three Samples failed to pass the coliform test, one Sample also contained excessive numbers of bacteria.]						

Ice-cream Sampling.

Number of Samples taken	...	...	...	...	...	31
Number of Samples satisfactory	...	...	...	...	...	27

Meat and Other Foods.

Number of Inspections	...	...	...	...	...	138
Total weight of meat and other foodstuffs condemned:—						
Tons.		Cwts.		Qrs.		Lbs.
1	...	11	...	0	...	20½

Knackers Yards.

Number of Premises	...	...	...	...	...	1
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	...	...	19

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifiable Diseases.

As already pointed out I am able to report a total incidence of notifiable diseases which has only once been bettered since 1939. The highest peak was touched during the war year of 1941, when the notifications totalled 1,790. This figure was mainly the result of a widespread epidemic of Measles. In 1948 the total of all notifiable diseases was 242.

Diphtheria.

A noteworthy feature of this report is that only two cases of Diphtheria occurred during the whole year, the lowest figure ever recorded in the district. That this is largely due to the cumulative effect of immunisation can hardly be doubted. Such a figure, while being most satisfactory, is, however, no cause for complacency. The fight against Diphtheria must be waged unceasingly. Every child should be immunised as soon as possible after reaching the age of nine months, and should thereafter receive re-inforcing injections at appropriate ages. The aim is a nil return for this dangerous disease.

The responsibility for Diphtheria immunisation is now entirely in the hands of Local Health Authorities. It is for them to provide propaganda and service. This Council instituted Diphtheria immunisation, on my advice, in 1936, and the work has been carried on consistently since then. In 1945 the County Council took over responsibility, but where local schemes were considered to be satisfactory, as was the case in Brentwood, no change was made in current arrangements. With the coming into being of the new National Health Service Act, it is for the Local Health Authority to organise Diphtheria immunisation through its Area Health Committee.

Pending any new scheme, I was asked in August to carry on the actual work of immunisation as heretofore at the County Council's Clinic.

Attendances at the Immunisation Clinic from the 1st January, 1948, to the 4th July, 1948, were as follows:—

Number of children who received their second injection	35	} 170 Immunisation completed.
Number of children who received both injections	135	
Number of children who received their first injection	23	
Number of children who received a "boosting" injection	68	
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Total number of children treated ...	261	
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Total number of injections given ...	396	

Scabies.

Before the second world war no provision for the treatment of persons suffering from scabies was found to be necessary in this District beyond the facilities for children at the County Council's Clinic.

During the war a Scabies Order was made by the Minister of Health in 1941 to deal with the possible spread of this skin infection resulting from mass movements of population, evacuation, overcrowding, and other problems of total warfare.

A Scabies Clinic was set up in November, 1943, in temporary accommodation, first at "Oakbank" First Aid Post and later at the Doddinghurst Road Depot, for the treatment of persons of both sexes and any age. No regular sessions could be held for lack of cases. A female nurse or male attendant treated the cases as and when necessary.

This Clinic was closed in June, 1948, thus reverting to the pre-war position.

Figures of attendances during the first six months of the year were as follows:—

Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
5	...	7	...	30

MISCELLANEOUS.

Foot Clinic.

Table of Attendances—

The following figures show the number of persons treated between the 1st January, 1948, and the 4th July, 1948:—

New Patients.						Attendances by:				
Adults.		Children.		O.A.P.		New	Old			
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	Patients.	Patients.		Total.	
25	72	3	12	14	29	...	155	1,939	...	2,094

Swimming Pools.

The following Samples were taken from Swimming Pools and submitted to bacteriological and chemical examination:—

					Satisfactory.	Unsatisfactory.
Brentwood Urban District Council	...	...	...	...	5	—
Ursuline High School	...	...	...	...	1	—
Brentwood Boys' School	...	...	...	...	1	—
County High School for Girls	...	...	...	...	1	—
					8	—

Factories Act, 1937.

1. Inspections—

Premises.	Inspections.	Number of Notices served.	Notices Complied.
Factories (Power)	95	8	4
Factories (Non-Power)	31	2	1

2. Defects Found—

Particulars.	Found.	Remedied.
Lack of Cleanliness	3	3
Defective Sanitary Accommodation	2	1
Insufficient Sanitary Accommodation	4	1
Defective Floors	1	—

3. Outworkers—

Number of Outworkers	12
Number of Inspections	4

BIRTHS AND DEATHS.

Live Births.	Total.	M.	F.
Legitimate	425	226	199
Illegitimate	19	6	13
Total.		M.	F.
Stillbirths	7	5	2

The Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total births was 15.52.

	Total.	M.	F.
Deaths	275	140	135

Deaths at Various Ages.

Age Groups.

No. of Deaths.

	M.	F.	Total.
Under 1 year	5	5	10
1 and under 2	2	1	3
2 and under 5	—	—	—
5 and under 15	—	—	—
15 and under 25	4	1	5
25 and under 35	1	3	4
35 and under 45	5	7	12
45 and under 55	17	8	25
55 and under 65	20	27	47
65 and under 75	43	24	67
75 and upwards	43	59	102
Total.	140	135	275

Causes of Death.

Cause of Death.

No. of Deaths.

	M.	F.	Total.
Whooping Cough	—	1	1
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	8	4	12
Other Forms of Tuberculosis	1	—	1
Cancer	27	23	50
Diabetes	—	2	2
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	20	22	42
Heart Diseases	43	39	82
Other Diseases of the Circulatory System	5	9	14
Bronchitis	3	3	6
Pneumonia	6	2	8
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	1	2
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	1	2	3
Other Digestive Diseases	2	4	6
Nephritis	1	2	3
Congenital Malformations, Birth Injuries, etc.	—	3	3
Suicide	1	1	2
Road Traffic Accidents	2	1	3
Other Violent Causes	4	3	7
All other Causes	15	13	28
Total.	140	135	275

ANALYSIS OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES UNDER AGE GROUPS.

Age Groups.

Diseases.	Total.											65 and over.	
	Under 1	1—2	2—3	3—4	4—5	5—10	10—15	15—20	20—35	35—45	45—65		
Diphtheria ...	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Scarlet Fever ...	1	—	2	2	—	20	6	—	1	—	—	—	32
Erysipelas ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	3
Dysentery ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	—	3
Pneumonia ...	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	3
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Whooping Cough ...	9	12	16	13	21	48	1	—	2	—	—	—	122
Measles ...	2	5	13	16	18	15	2	1	—	—	—	—	72
Jaundice ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	1	—	—	4
	12	17	32	31	39	85	10	1	8	2	4	1	242

